

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Videotaped Remarks to the Korea Society 2010 Annual Dinner

June 2, 2010

Good evening, everyone. I appreciate the opportunity to send my wishes as you celebrate the unbreakable bonds between the United States and the Republic of Korea. This year, of course, holds special meaning for us all.

We recall that it was exactly 60 years ago, on another June day, when the Communist armies poured across the 38th Parallel and threatened the very survival of the Republic of Korea.

We honor all those who rallied to her defense, the fallen whose names are etched in sacred memorials, and veterans like General Paik who join you tonight.

We salute the resolve of the people of the Republic of Korea, who, from the ruins of war, built an economic miracle, a vibrant democracy, a society where a child could grow up to be Secretary-General of the United Nations, and a nation that is now a regional and global leader.

We thank all those who have stood with the Republic of Korea to keep her safe and strong, especially our Korean American friends, the Korea Society, and generations of Americans in uniform, including my friend, General Colin Powell.

Most of all, we reaffirm the enduring alliance between our countries, an alliance rooted in shared sacrifice, common values, mutual interest, and mutual respect, an alliance that is stronger than ever. And, as we have seen in recent weeks, our alliance is needed more than ever.

The attack on the navy vessel *Cheonan* was an unprovoked act of aggression by North Korea. As I have told President Lee, I and the American people offer our deepest condolences, especially to the families of the 46 sailors who were lost.

To our friends from the Republic of Korea who join you tonight, I say this: You and President Lee have shown extraordinary patience and self-restraint. You have shown the world what true strength and confidence looks like. And you have the full support of your friend and ally, the United States of America.

In the days ahead, our Governments will continue to consult closely, and I look forward to meeting with President Lee this month in Toronto. Together, we will ensure our readiness and deter aggression. We will work with allies and partners to hold North Korea accountable, including at the United Nations Security Council, making it clear that security and respect for North Korea will never come through aggression, but only by upholding its obligations. And as I said during my visit to Seoul and Osan last fall, the commitment of the United States to the security and defense of the Republic of Korea will never waver.

Going forward, we will pursue our shared vision of our alliance for the 21st century. As the host of the G-20 summit in November and the nuclear security summit in 2 years, the Republic of Korea will continue to assume its rightful place as a leader on the world stage.

And every step of the way, our two nations will be guided by the same sense of solidarity and shared sacrifice that has defined us for 60 years: *Katchi kapshida*—we go together. We go

together in these difficult days, and we will continue to go together in the months and years to come.

Thank you, and have a wonderful evening.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4:55 p.m. on May 27 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at the dinner on June 2 in New York City. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Paik Sun-yup, former Republic of Korea Army Chief of Staff; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations; and former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Korea Society 2010 Annual Dinner, videotaped remarks.

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